

H.B. No. 6800 (Raised) AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC BOOK AND DIGITAL AUDIOBOOK LICENSING.

Dear Senator Rahman, Representative Kavros DeGraw, and Honorable Members of the Planning & Development Committee,

I am a resident of Fairfield and a librarian in Wilton, so I have experience with eBooks from both the provider and user. I am writing to support **HB6800**, an act concerning Electronic Book and Digital Audiobook Licensing.

I have been purchasing eBooks and eAudiobooks since 2010 and have seen many changes in the industry over time, all of which increasingly benefit publishers and limit access to libraries and Connecticut citizens. From the librarian side, I have to explain to frustrated patrons why the wait for title is months long. From a patron perspective, I am aggravated that my tax dollars are going towards overpriced licenses that will expire in a short amount of time.

One current bestseller, *It Starts with Us* by Colleen Hoover, retails for \$10.99 on Amazon. Thanks to collective pricing deals, my library pays \$10.79 for the paperback. The eBook license, which only lasts for 12 months, costs \$60. Currently at my library there are 28 patrons waiting to check out this eBook. At the rate of the 21-day checkout, this means the title can only be checked out 17 times before the license expires in 12 months. If I only purchase one license for this eBook (for \$60), the 28th person on the list will wait a year and a half for the eBook. Not only will patrons have to wait an inordinate amount of time to read this eBook, I will have to purchase another copy for \$60 when the license runs out after 12 months. This means my library will be spending \$120 on an eBook that costs \$11 as a paperback.

As a librarian, I am constantly trying to balance patron demand with my limited budget. As a patron, I am furious that my hometown library is forced to spend my tax dollars in ways that requires them to abide by these inequitable license terms. I hope that legislative action will encourage publishers come to the negotiating table with libraries to determine more equitable terms.

For these reasons, I strongly support HB 6800. I hope that our esteemed Connecticut lawmakers will listen to their constituents who support this bill.

Thank you for your time,

Melissa Baker

